

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

RULE AMENDMENT WAC 173-50

Description of proposal

**Amendments to WAC 173-50, *Accreditation of Environmental Laboratories*. The amendments will change the fee schedule of Ecology's Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) and will change some business practices to reflect a cut in the program budget.**

**Our current fee structure does not cover the full cost of Ecology's Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP), and consequently the services we provide to labs are subsidized by the state general fund. In the current budget, the legislature authorized Ecology to raise fees to cover the cost of the program. We have eliminated one of seven positions in the program, but still need to raise fees by about 45% to fully fund the remaining program. Our fee structure revision will also align fees with the level of services required to accredit different types of labs. With the loss of one of our positions, we will also need to change some business practices specified in the rules; this will reduce our oversight of accredited labs. We are also clarifying the grounds for revoking or suspending accreditation so that our rules expressly state that suspension or revocation can occur for failure to pay mandatory fees and for failure to maintain third party accreditation.**

**Proponent: Lab Accreditation Unit, Environmental Assessment Program, Department of Ecology**

Location of proposal, including street address, if any:

**Laboratories participating in this program are located throughout the state, in other states, and in Canada.**

Lead agency: **Department of Ecology**

**The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.**

**Reasons/Findings of no significance: This proposal involves mainly procedural changes. Ecology evaluated whether these changes could decrease the quality of data produced by accredited labs, and thus potentially lower environmental protection, but concluded these changes would not have an adverse environmental impact. Transportation-related impacts are likely to decrease from the proposed change in accreditation requirements.**

Comment period: **Will coincide with CR-102 public process.**

Responsible official: **Robert Duff**

Position/title **Environmental Assessment Program Manager, WA Department of Ecology**

Phone: **(360) 407-6699**

Address: **P.O. Box 47710, Olympia WA 98504-7710**

Date

3/18/10

Signature

